



AEA Workshop Dec. 12 Offers Help to Petitioners

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MADISON –Anyone interested in designating an agricultural enterprise area, including landowners, local government leaders and business people, can learn about the process at a workshop 10 a.m. to noon Thursday, Dec. 12.

Participants can attend in person or via webinar. Staff from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will provide guidance and answer questions, whether participants are already developing a petition or still considering what they might need to do before submitting a petition in the future.

For those attending in person, the workshop will meet in room 106 at the State Agriculture Building, 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison. To access via webinar, participants will need an access code. To register or to attend via webinar, email or call Coreen Fallat, coreen.fallat@wi.gov, 608-224-4625.

Agricultural enterprise areas, or AEAs, are blocks of land that are primarily in agricultural use, either for farming or for businesses that serve the farming sector. They are created when local governments together with at least five local landowners petition the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the department approves the designation.

AEA designation by itself does not limit land use within the area, or protect from encroaching development. It does allow farmers within the AEA to receive tax credits of \$5-\$10 per acre if they enter farmland preservation agreements with the department. The designation can also be used with local planning and zoning, conservation easements, ag economic development incentives and other tools to support farming and the local farm economy.

To date, DATCP has designated 25 AEAs totaling 750,000 acres. The goal is to designate 250,000 additional acres in AEAs during the current petition cycle. The petition period is open through March 31, 2014. Petition materials are available online at <http://workinglands.wi.gov>.

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